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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002010

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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SPG, AND AF/RSA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [PGOV](#) [US](#) [EU](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: BROADENING THE BASE OF DPA SUPPORT

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Embassy Khartoum has spoken with numerous SLM dissidents who favor international support for a meeting with a focus on sorting out leadership issues. EU and UK Special Envoys for Darfur and UK Embassy officials have told us that support for an SLM/Shafi conference should be tied to support for the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). There are differences regarding timing and venue; it will be impossible to collect a substantial number of SLM leaders without agreement of Sudanese government and help from the UN. Individual SLM/Shafi representatives want to meet USG officials to discuss how to make the DPA relevant to the needs of the people they claim to represent. Unmet SLM objectives include individual compensation and janjaweed disarmament. End summary.

EU Special Envoy for Darfur Haavisto Talks to Shafi

¶2. (C) During Charge Hume's August 24 meeting with Pekka Haavisto, EU Special Envoy for Darfur, Haavisto said that he had spoken with SLM leader Ahmed Abdel Shafi twice during the past week. Haavisto said he had solicited Shafi's support for the DPA. Shafi outlined SLM plans for a conference at which the movement would discuss its leadership; Haavisto responded that the EU could support a conference provided it focused on support for the DPA. Shafi told Haavisto that perhaps the G-19 rebel faction's decision not to support the DPA could be shifted in the context of a general meeting with other SLM leaders. Haavisto told Hume that Abdel Shafi's friends had been seeking support from several European governments for a conference, but EU governments did not want to support a conference that might simply increase opposition to the DPA.

UK Consults on an SLM/Shafi Conference

¶3. (C) In an August 25 meeting of Charge Hume, USAID Mission Director, and Pol/Econ Chief with UK Special Envoy for Darfur Amb. Rod Pullen, Charge, and Political Officer, discussion focused on strategies for engaging the SLM to support the DPA. UK Embassy officers have traveled to Darfur to assess prospects for broadening support for the DPA among the Fur in particular; their meetings also involved discussions with NRF rebels. The Fur are anxious about their political exclusion, and are increasingly factionalized. To address this, several Fur leaders want support for SLM/Shafi organizing meetings. Their priority is to discuss intra-SLM structure and clarify in its leadership.

¶4. (C) Amb. Pullen counseled against a conference now. The immediate focus of those he spoke with was to determine SLM

leadership and broad objectives before taking a position on the DPA. The best place for such a meeting would be in Darfur, where delegates could arrive on their own. A meeting elsewhere, whether in southern Sudan or Nairobi (a site mentioned by some of our contacts) would require the involvement of the UN and the government of Sudan. He thought it essential to have further contacts with potential participants before bringing them together; it was important to stress to them that the international community was firm behind a position of no more fighting and support for the DPA. Even so, such a meeting offered the risks of discussion whether to join the NRF in rejecting the DPA. Remaining question marks included the role of the AU, UN, and Minni Minawi, now the Senior Assistant to the President. Pullen suggested the need for the USG to undertake its own contacts with leaders in the field.

SLM: Interested in Talks with USG, Way Forward on DPA

15. (C) Post has engaged a number of prominent SLM/Shafi representatives to get a sounding on their receptiveness to discussions with USG officials on the DPA. Consensus emerged, with the following points made consistently by interlocutors, who come from the Fur, Berti, Masalit, Midob, and Zaghawa communities, as follows:

-- A critical mass has formed behind Ahmed Abdel Shafi following a lengthy period of disengagement by former SLM leader Abdel Wahid Mohamed al-Nour. He is blamed by followers for the failure of his faction to achieve its objectives in the Abuja peace negotiations and his inability to articulate the way forward for the SLM. SLM patience with

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Abdel Wahid has run out;

-- The SLM representatives do not want war, and seek avenues for peace. Those we spoke with told us they do not intend to join the NRF;

-- SLM representatives are willing and even eager to meet with USG officials to discuss the DPA and how to render it attractive to the SLM;

-- Areas of DPA interest include, first and foremost, individual compensation. Of secondary importance is participation in janjaweed disarmament and incorporation of SLM rebels in the police and military. These elements address the sense of humiliation felt by the IDPs. Of lesser significance is the naming of SLM/Shafi representatives to political positions. Many said they felt they could install those who could speak for them through future elections;

-- Although some felt the Jebel Marra area of central Darfur would be the best location for discussions, others supported eventually holding a conference in Southern Sudan. Various representatives mentioned the need to engage the SPLM and GoSS President Salva Kiir. Solidarity with the SPLM would be of strategic significance, as the South had negotiated the CPA and sympathized with other marginalized peoples of Sudan.

-- Minni Minawi's ascendancy complicated the situation in Darfur, particularly among the Fur, who see themselves isolated and left out of the political process.

Comment

16. (C) Getting these SLM leaders together in a conference is a good idea, but in what conference? At the outset it is important that these leaders recognize that the USG position is to support peace and the DPA, including a process that can

produce benefits in terms of compensation, disarmament, and representation. However they sort out their leadership issues, the USG will not support a rejectionist/back to war position. Embassy Khartoum is examining whether it would be feasible for an embassy officer to accompany UK colleague on a trip to the field to get across this message and to start laying a solid basis for such a conference. End comment.
HUME